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O'Leary, as well by virtue of his magisterial authority as his local and personal influence, maintained the peace at the neighbouring fairs and markets. No constabulary or military assistance was in those days necessary to enforce his behests; his commands were, in most cases, sufficient; but if any proved refractory, obedience was promptly obtained by the vigorous application of the long and weighty pole which he ever carried. His figure was lofty, athletic, and commanding; in his latter days, extremely venerable and patriarchal. He generally stationed himself in Mill-street in the morning of each succeeding day, his long pole supporting his steps, and ready, if necessary, to maintain his authority. There he introduced himself to every passing traveller of respectability, and invited him to enter his ever open door, and partake of his unbounded hospitality. O'Leary, as he was called, being the then head of that ancient house, is dead about forty years, the last male representative of a long line of chieftains, and one of the last (perhaps the very last) who kept up that unlimited hospitality which was once the characteristic of his countrymen. We should perhaps add, that some of the collateral branches of the clan still exist in the district, which derives its name from the family. H.

THE BROKEN FIDDLE.

A SKETCH FROM REAL LIFE.

Poor blind Jemmy Connor!—he played the sweet and plaintive melodies of our Green Isle with a deep and touching pathos. I have listened to him for hours with a mixture of sadness and pleasure; and as he drew the varying heart-touching strains from the strings of his fiddle, I do not feel ashamed to own that he drew the tears from my eyes. He was taught by affliction. But, perhaps, you have never heard the story of Jemmy Connor and his broken fiddle? Well, then, I will tell it you.

The calm sunshine of domestic happiness brightened and made glad the young days of Jemmy Connor. He had married early in life the object of his devoted affection, whose faithful love and cheerful attention to household duties had endeared to him his little home. He never missed the clean and tidy room, the comfortable and wholesome repast, and the welcoming smile, at his return from his work; and his sober and industrious habits had gained for him the esteem and confidence of his employer. Jemmy and Mary Connor were happier in their humble dwelling than many a lordly owner of a proud and princely palace.

Years of peace and joy rolled over their heads; and, though they had wept at the grave of two of their infant offspring, still they were happy; for their eldest, a sweet, blue-eyed girl, was spared to them; and, shortly after, a son opened its smiling eyes upon the glad pair. But, in giving birth to this last child, poor Mary Connor had taken cold, which brought on that wasting harbinger of death that follows so many families, and was hereditary in hers. Consumption laid its blighting hand upon her shrinking frame, and left the heart-stricken and inconsolable husband a young widower. How uncertain are the enjoyments of the world!—how fleeting are its pleasures!

In that same room, about six years after, Jemmy Connor lay upon a sick bed; he had taken the small-pox from his little son, who had recovered; but the doctor seemed to have little hope that he would rise from that bed again. His daughter, now twelve years of age, tended and watched him with untiring solicitude and affection; nor would she quit him, though entreated to leave that scene of danger. He did recover—he rose from the bed of sickness—but his sight was gone for ever!

"Dear father!" said Mary Connor, as she sat busily engaged at her needle—the setting sun shining upon them, and the summer breeze, as it passed over the box of blooming mignonette at the opened window, filling the room with fragrance—"Dear father, I am just thinking how good the Lord has been to us, in raising up for us such kind friends. I would not have found it easy to get this work, were it not for that benevolent lady, who exerted herself among her friends, and so earnestly recommended me to them; and how could we have managed to keep this little room so long, but for your kind employer?"

"True, my dearest child, we have great reason to be thankful. The Lord is good! And though I have met with my own share of affliction, my heart is resigned, and I am still happy—very, very happy—since you are spared to me to bless my darkened hours."

As Mary took his extended hand affectionately in hers, he felt a tear fall upon it.

"Reach me down my fiddle, my dear child," said he, "and I will play you one of your favourite little airs."

Jemmy had amused many a leisure hour, in his younger and happier days, by striving to become a proficient on this instrument. The fiddle, which Mary now handed down to him, was one which his lamented wife had herself purchased for him, and he prized it above all he possessed on earth, next to his beloved Mary and his little Jemmy. Since he had the misfortune of losing his sight it had been a constant source of pleasure to him, and had soothed away many a bitter pang.

I said that consumption was an hereditary complaint in his wife's family. Alas! it soon showed itself in Mary's delicate frame, in the hectic flush of her cheek, and the short oppressive cough. Poor Jemmy Connor! his story is a sad one. His fond, affectionate daughter—the child of his heart—his good, his pious Mary, was carried to an early grave; and it was many a day before he recovered from the effects of this overwhelming shock!

Taking his little boy by one hand, and his fiddle in the other, he left the home where all the ties that bound him to earth were breaking one by one. He could not bear to be any longer a dependent on the generosity of his former master, and was now determined to make his fiddle, which was hitherto only his amusement, the means of his own and his son's subsistence. Rambling through the country, from one farm-house to another, Jemmy Connor and his son became well known and universally liked; and, as he played the old Irish airs sweetly and clearly, you would scarcely see a dry eye among those who were grouped in listening silence around him.

It was a beautiful day in Autumn; the sun was shining on hill and valley, on wood and stream; the song of the lark was breaking from the far-off golden clouds in strains of thrilling melody, which the wrapt fancy might mistake for a cherub's hymn of praise; the rich meadows filled the air with fragrance; and the produce of the fields, which were lately white with the harvest, was conveyed by the busy husbandmen into the well-filled granaries of the farmer. All was cheerfulness, and praise, and love. Even the very beasts seemed to partake of the general joy. And cold must be the heart that could gaze on such a scene without being lifted up in thankfulness to Him who giveth the rain, and the sunshine, and the abundance of the harvest.

There was one that passed through that scene, and, though he saw it not, yet felt his bosom expand with gratitude. The sweet fresh air gladdened his upturned brow, and Jemmy Connor passed along, led by his little son. They were invited to a farmer's house, and they were now taking a short cut through a pathway across the fields. Suddenly, the joyous and exciting halloo of the huntsmen came upon the wind, mingled with the deep-toned yellings of the hounds. A hare, closely pursued, darted, with the speed of desperation, by the father and son; almost in the next instant, the hounds and the huntsmen came thundering on.

"Out of the way, you wandering vagabond!" roared a hoarse voice, in startling execration.

"Hasten, dear father!—hasten!" said the trembling boy.

The father, unused to such harsh words, and alarmed at the danger he could not see, dropped his fiddle, and the hindmost hoofs of the flying hunter striking against it, shivered it into pieces.

"Your music is finished," laughed out the unfeeling huntsman, as he bounded over a hedge.

Oh! who could portray the deep, the heart-felt agony of poor Jemmy! All the afflictions of his life seemed crowded together in that last misfortune. Had he been offered a purse of gold in exchange for his fiddle, he would have spurned at it, so hallowed had it become in his remembrance. It was the long-cherished gift of his first and only love; it had been the delight of his dear, his departed daughter, who oft had mingled her sweet song

with its notes; it was the soother of his cares, and the means of supporting his remaining child, his faithful Jemmy.

When the noise had passed away, he stooped down, and said, in a tone of agony, for he heard the crash, "Is it broke, Jemmy?"

"Broke! broke!" exclaimed the little fellow, sobbing bitterly. "Aye, dear father, it is broke into a thousand pieces!"

The poor blind man clasped his hands, and stood in utterable anguish; the child cried and sobbed as if his heart would break; and a man twice addressed them, in a voice of condolence, ere they were aware of his approach. It was the farmer who had invited them to his house. He had seen the huntsmen sweeping by—had heard the rough and cruel exclamation—and, fearing that some accident had occurred, he hastened towards them, and saw the scattered fragments which the boy was taking from the bag and laying on the grass.

"Curse on the hard-hearted villain!" said he. "May the red vengeance hotly pursue him, and may he break!"

"Hush, hush!" said poor Jemmy, roused from the depth of his sorrow. "Curse him not; vengeance is not fitted for our weak and erring hands. May the Lord forgive him! and I forgive him, though he has laid this desolate heart completely bare by that one blow."

"Come, come," said the farmer, dashing away the tears of pity which filled his eyes, "you are heartily welcome to my fire-side still. Come, both of you. I will take no excuse. But rouse yourself, man, and, with the blessing of God, you shall have another fiddle as good as the one you lost."

"Never! never!" said the blind man; "never will I handle the like of that again! It was dear and more precious to me than the eyesight which I lost. When I felt it in my hand—when I heard its soothing tone, it illumined my soul with the light of former days; and then my wife, my child, my happiness that vanished when they were gone, came floating through my mind like a sweet dream! It was the gift of my wife. Ah! little did the thoughtless huntsman think that when he broke that precious gift, he broke the minstrel's heart!"

Alas! and so it did. The worthy farmer strove to cheer his guest—in vain; he never rose from his bed again; and a few days after, he was laid in his last home. His parting moments were brightened by the kindness and attention of the farmer, who promised to adopt the little Jemmy—he had no son of his own—which he faithfully fulfilled; and, in course of time, he gave him his daughter in marriage.

Such is the sad tale; and I never meet one of those wandering minstrels, who are, in general, such favourites among our peasantry—particularly if he should happen to be blind—that I do not think of poor Jemmy Connor and his broken fiddle.

C. L.

COMPARISON OF THE ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE KINGDOMS.

On cursorily viewing the animal and vegetable kingdoms, the eye is so readily presented with the conspicuous differences, that the mind of the general observer rests satisfied, that the line between them is distinct and definite. In the sturdy oak, the living memorial of past ages, that has stood the rage of tempests, and only seems more vigorous from the lapse of time—or the flower that blooms, and dies in a day, he sees no shadow of resemblance with the animated beings which find shelter in its branches, or draw honey from the nectaries attached to its petals. But if he examine the vegetable kingdom in its simplest form—the lichen, the moss, or the fungus—or, as it evinces higher characters of organization in the sensitive plant, that withering shrinks from the touch of man—the fly-trap, that seizes on the insect necessary for its nourishment—the pitcher of the nepenthes, that when filled with water closes in dry weather to prevent the evaporation of the liquid, and in a moist atmosphere causes its cover to receive the liquids requisite for its use—the holly, that while within reach of injury from animals is armed with prickles, yet resigning its spears when beyond

the grasp of the enemy—the numerous flowers that sleep at night, or close their petals at regular periods, all exhibiting powers that betray life more abundantly than the coralline or zoophyte, he will observe a link that connects man, with his powers and his proud pre-eminence, to the simplest of plants and animals, the difference consisting in degrees of development and organization. Aristotle designated plants as animals turned inside out; others ascribe the distinction as evinced by plants being denied the power of locomotion; but by availing ourselves of the knowledge, and attending to the researches and discoveries of the moderns, we shall be better enabled to trace analogies and determine differences which are more or less evident. Elements that enter into the composition of animals, are, with few exceptions, required to act in the vegetable formation; their relative quantity and their mode of combining present the most remarkable difference. Oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, and nitrogen, are to be found in both; nitrogen more particularly belongs to animals, carbon to vegetables: the cotton, white and bursting from its pod, is the purest vegetable carbon. Phosphorus and ammonia are also found in plants: the stephalia, and other flowers, owe their fetid smell, by which flies are attracted, to the disengagement of ammoniacal gas. Lime and silex are also claimed as the constituent parts of some vegetables. Thus the hard and polished case of the stalks of the cane, and many of the grasses, is composed of silex, which may be obtained in the form of small glass globules after the plants are burned. These globules answer for powerful microscopes.

The immediate principles of vegetable matter are the threefold combinations of hydrogen, oxygen, and carbon. Vegetables abound in acids, which are freely exhibited in fruits, leaves, and the cellular tissue, but rarely in the seeds or roots. The richness and variety of vegetable products are founded on the above-mentioned basis—and starch, gum, resins, resinous liquids or balsms, sugar, in the cane, grape, and mushroom, the fatty, essential and aromatic oils, camphire and tannin, result from different combinations of these simple substances. By the addition of nitrogen we have indigo, and other colouring matters, gluten, albumen, &c. The chief difference observable in the chemical combination of substances necessary to the life of plants and animals, is, that more simplicity and fewer elements enter into the organization of vegetables.

In comparing the relative size of the two kingdoms, excess of dimensions belong to the vegetable tribe. The mighty baobab, the spreading banyan, the stately cedar, far surpass the largest of the animal species; the whale, the great serpent, the elephant, and the ostrich, offer masses considerably less. The manifestation of life in vegetables, is exhibited by increase of volume and luxuriant growth of parts; and, with the exception of the moss tribe, they do not present the same minute forms as in the animal kingdom, for here we meet beings so minute as to almost baffle the power of the microscope to distinguish their structure. In the circumstance of having their exterior bounded by waving or curved lines, we find an agreement between plants and animals. And this is one of the distinctive characters between them and mineral substances, which in their crystalline state present straight lines. But vegetables differ from animals in the circumstance of their symmetry. Thus in almost all animals, a line drawn vertically separates the body into two symmetrical halves, at least with respect to the external parts. To this rule, however, there are a few exceptions, as in the plaice and fish of that tribe, who have two eyes on one side of the body. That symmetry belongs to plants as well as to animals, cannot be denied, but it is not so decided; their bodies do not, when parted longitudinally, evince regularity of organs; though the flowers, sub-leaves, and fruits, show greater disposition to symmetry in form. A horizontal line separates the most complex vegetable into two distinct parts; the stem, with its branches, leaves, fruit, and flowers, depending on the influence of the sun for its vital principle, rises into the atmosphere for light, heat, and vivifying air; while the root penetrates into the earth, and by its searching fibres hid from light, seeks from the moist soil the fluids which it